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Another look at the tragedy

FOUR YEARS after the assassination of President John F. Kennedy and three years after the publication of the Warren Commission's report, the questions of who, how many and why are still being asked. The official answers, as expressed in the Warren Report, have been analyzed by the skeptical minds of attorneys, journalists and the man in the street and in many cases these answers have been found wanting. Doubts about the Warren Report are now so widespread that a recent public opinion poll revealed that two-thirds of American voters believe the assassination was the result of a plot in which Lee Harvey Oswald played only a role.

What are the reasons for this doubt? Dr. Albert Ellis, a noted psychologist and the executive director of the Institute for Rational Living in New York, has looked into the psychological reasons behind it and has found that, while some doubts are understandable in view of the comparative haste with which the Warren Report was compiled and the inconclusive nature of some of the evidence, there is a "deep irrationality" among many people who think the President was murdered by conspirators.

These people, he claims, form their theories not from facts or reasoning, but from deep-set fears and prejudices, which may take the form of suspicion of the Establishment, belief that political motives were behind the deed or a suggestibility which assumes that if there is criticism of the Report, the Report must be wrong. Other reasons, as listed by Ellis, include:

Scapegoating—Innumerable extremists at home and abroad have a violent hatred of Communists, right-wingers, the CIA, the FBI, or what you will. Once anything in the way of a major disaster occurs, these people become convinced that their special gang of villains darkly maneuvered the deed.

Myth-making—Many regarded Kennedy as a heroic figure and cannot accept the possibility that he was struck down by a mere mortal. They feel that only a gigantic conspiracy could have brought about his demise.

Need for certainty—Disturbed individuals cannot stand uncertainty, but demand absolute order in the world. Hence, some people cannot accept the possibility that Oswald alone might have killed President Kennedy. Their absolutistic "logic" makes them come to the conclusion that if Oswald conceivably hadn't been Kennedy's assassin he therefore did not do the deed.

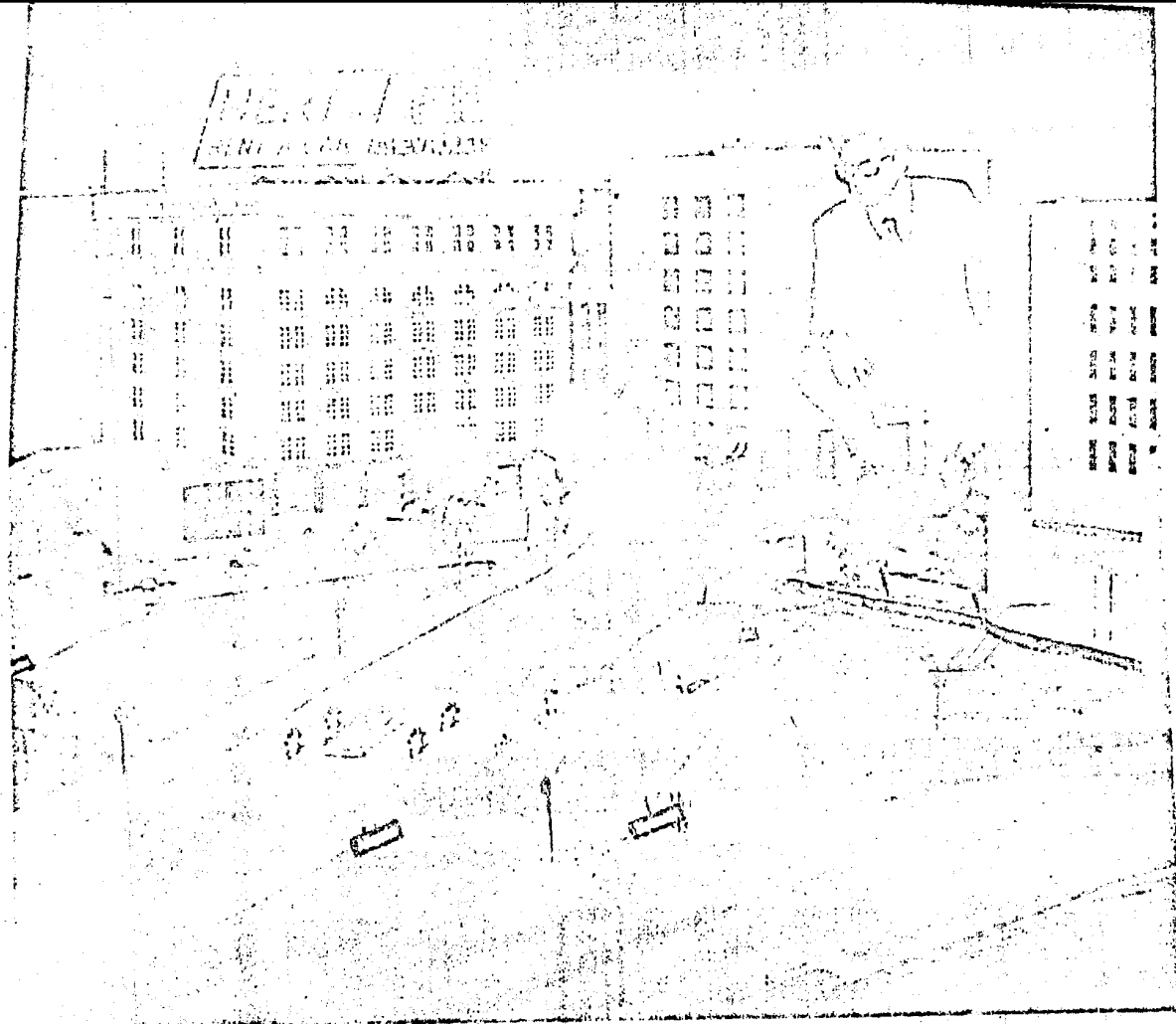


Who killed the President? Is the answer in the Warren Report, in one of the books criticizing it or elsewhere?

New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison believes that there was a conspiracy to kill President John F. Kennedy.



Continued



Attorney Mark Lane, a sharp critic of the Warren Report, looms over a scale model of Dallas assassination scene.

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